

The Vinton Chronicles

November/December 2009
Volume 1, Issue 2

Principal James E. Palmer

Principal's News



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Upcoming Events

- ◆ **Book Fair**
November 20th,
23rd, and 24th
- ◆ **Winter Concert**
December 8th

As you receive this edition of *The Vinton Chronicles*, Thanksgiving will be right around the corner. I am thankful every day to be surrounded by wonderful children, supportive parents, and a dedicated staff. What a gift! On behalf of the entire Vinton School Family, my best wishes for a pleasant and enjoyable Thanksgiving holiday.

- **Did you schedule a conference?** As you know, we will be holding Parent-Teacher conferences on November 23 and 24. Besides your child's classroom teacher, please feel free to request a conference with other teachers, e.g., Music, P.E., Spanish, Art, and Enrichment. Also, should you need to see me about anything, please feel free to let me know or just stop in.
- **No Idle Zone ...** The Vinton School parking lot has been designated as a "no idle zone" for cars and school buses. Recently our bus fleet was retrofitted with engine and exhaust devices to enhance pollution control and improve fuel efficiency. Please help by turning off your car's engine even if you are running into school for just a few minutes.
- **Open for Discussion ...** Please allow me to invite you to a Community Conversation with Superintendent of Schools, Fred Baruzzi. Mr. Baruzzi will be at Vinton School to provide you with updates on several topics including the proposed school renovation project, Pre-School, School Security and much more.

But mostly, he will be at Vinton to answer your questions. Please join us on Tuesday, December 1st at 8:30 a.m. or 7:00 p.m. in the Vinton Library.

- **Free Tickets to "Study Island"...** Did you know that all third and fourth grade students have a free ticket to Study Island? Study Island is a web-based math and reading site designed to supplement and reinforce skills that are taught in class. Our goal is for all students to be regular visitors to The Island. Please contact your child's teacher or me if you need additional information.
- **It's not the Temperature, it's the Wind Chill ...** With colder weather approaching please remember to send your child dressed appropriately for outdoor recess. In general, if the temperature is above twenty degrees with relatively low wind, the children go outside to play. If there's too much ice or wind, we stay indoors. But, if possible, we vote for fresh air and sunshine rather than staying indoors. Thanks in advance for your help.
- **Anything Else?** As always, please feel free to call me at 860-423-3086, extension 208 or email at palmerje@mansfieldct.org if you have a question, comment or need information. Be well.

10 digit dialing

Effective November 14th, you must begin dialing the 860 prefix for all local calling.
Don't forget to reprogram your speed dial numbers, especially Vinton Office at (860) 423-3086!



Kindergarten News

Ms. Rudge, Mrs. Terry, Mr. Toomey

Kindergarten classes have been busy learning about seasonal changes and have done many related activities including planting bulbs, cleaning out our Kinder-garden, taking a field trip to Hurst Farm, and having a Harvest Fest/Halloween celebration.

Children have also been busy reading and writing their own stories. We have practiced writing letters and numbers using *Number Poems* to help us remember how each number should be

written. In Math, children have learned a lot about patterns and sorting. We have focused on numbers 1 to 10 through many games and activities, including "*Which Bug Will Win?*" and "*Beat You to Ten.*" Children are learning to count by 1's, 5's and 10's to 100!

Additionally, we are continuing our Kindergarten Clusters, which are a variety of activities that children rotate through each week in small groups.

First Grade News

Mrs. Prince-Warinsky, Ms. Sparks

We really enjoyed our trip to the Children's Museum in West Hartford last month. We would like to thank all our parent volunteers who made this trip possible. Another huge thank you goes to the Vinton PTA for funding this excellent learning opportunity.

Thanksgiving is around the corner and first grade will be learning about the

First Thanksgiving. Our first graders will be having their traditional Thanksgiving Feast in the first grade hallway on Wednesday, November 25th. Please watch for more information that will be coming home about this event.

We look forward to seeing you at Parent Teacher Conferences on November 23rd and 24th!

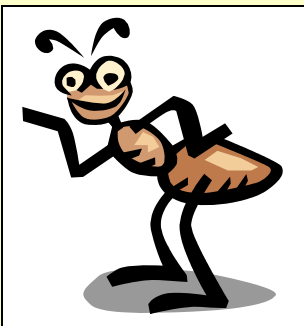
Second Grade News

Mrs. Bailey, Mrs. Harbec, Mrs. LeFevre

As November begins, second grade classes are busy working on our Math Unit, *Hungry Ants*. Along with exploring problem solving strategies in our Hungry Ants math unit, second graders are also conducting some scientific ant research.

We read about ant colonies, ant jobs, army ants, harvester ants, leaf cutter

ants, and formica ants. As good researchers, we were able to identify important ant facts and information while we read. We then recorded this newly learned information on our ant spreadsheets. The spreadsheets helped us to see the similarities and differences among the different kinds of ants as well as learn some really interesting ant facts!



Influenza Update

Mrs. Eaton, R.N.

Vinton experienced an increase in student absences for influenza-like illnesses from October 23rd through November 6th. Primary symptoms reported and/or seen in the health room included fever, cough and/or sore throat.

Viruses spread from person to person through coughing, sneezing and sometimes touching objects contaminated with the virus. Continue to encourage your family to

cover their coughs and sneezes, wash their hands frequently and avoid touching their faces.

Please continue to check your child every morning before sending him or her to school. If your child has both fever (100°F or 37.8°C) **AND** sore throat or cough then you must keep your child home from school and child care until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever, or signs of fever, **without the use of fever-reducing medications.**

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Third Grade News

Mrs. Csere, Mrs. Keenan, Ms. Welch

The third grade classes took a field trip to the Roger Williams Park Zoo on October 15th. Upon arriving at the zoo, we went to the educational center where we learned about wild habitats. From freezing tundra to arid deserts, animals have managed to make their homes everywhere. The students explored various habitats and the animals that call them home. Students are able to demonstrate examples of the adaptations living things use to survive in their habitats.

If you ask a student, the free exploration of the zoo animals might be their favorite. We saw a Giant Anteater, elephants, and wild dogs. It was a fun filled day that included a variety of weather events. From rain on

the way, to snow on the bus ride home, we made it a great field trip.

In the next month, students will be studying animals and their habitats. We will study biomes that include the desert, rainforest, and ocean. The students will learn and practice their research skills by choosing to focus on one particular animal. The students will take notes, research appearance, food, shelter, enemies, and other interesting facts. We will learn how to document resources and how to safely and effectively use internet tools to find information we need.

The culminating event to celebrate all of our hard work will be the Animal Habitat Expo on Wednesday, December 9th at 2:15pm.



Observing the Elephants during Grade 3's Field Trip to Roger Williams Zoo

Grade 4 News

Mrs. DeLoreto, Ms. Hain, Mrs. Phelps

We look forward to meeting with all of you during the upcoming Parent Conferences. We have begun our study of Native Americans and are focusing on the Eastern Woodland Native Americans.

In addition, we are planning a trip to the Mashantucket Pequot Museum on

Wednesday, December 2nd. More detailed information has been sent home by the classroom teachers.

This trip integrates perfectly with our Social Studies curriculum and allows the students to enrich and extend their classroom learning. Many thanks to the PTA for their generous support.

Preschool News

Mrs. Rameaka

What's inside pumpkins? The preschoolers discovered the answer as we turned our pumpkins into jack-o-lanterns. As the children explored the inside of the pumpkin (using their eyes, nose, and hands), we heard lots of

great descriptive words ("gooey," "sticky," "slimy," "slippery," and "it's really yucky!")

During the next few months we will focus our attention on owls, turkeys, families and holidays.

Winter Concert

Ms. Frascarelli

Vinton's Winter Concert will take place this year on Tuesday, December 8th. We will present our concert to students (and parents are welcome also) during our assembly at 2:45pm. The Evening performance will begin at 7:00pm. Of course, this being New England, the

chance of a school cancellation is certainly possible so our snow date is scheduled for the following Tuesday, December 15th. The performance times remain the same (2:45pm and 7:00pm).

We hope to see you there!



Concert rehearsals



From the Pages of the Library

Mrs. Parda

Pages are flying in the library and at home, as students are reading and recording their "minutes." We are entering month two of our participation in the UCONN program, **Geno's Reading Team!** If your child has yet to return their reading pledge, please encourage them to do so...we want everyone on the Vinton reading team!

Fourth graders are continuing their journey through the Nutmeg Nominees. Two more months before they vote on their favorite!

Grades one through four are winding up our first Shelf Elf contest ... ask your children if they were able to "put a bead in the bag" on their library day!

Kindergartners and preschoolers are enjoying stories and learning some library skills. We are having a great time in the library.

As always, if you have a special story that you would like to share with a class, we welcome guests! And don't forget our PTA Book Fair runs Nov 20th, 23rd, and 24th. More info coming soon!

Hola from Señora Zugarazo

Hola! Here's a brief update of what has been happening during Spanish classes in grades 2 through 4.

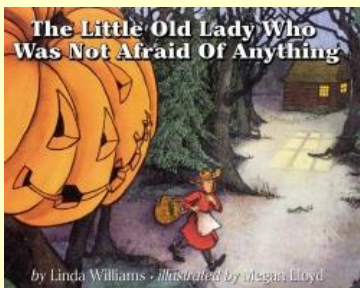
Grade 2: Students just finished their study of Día de los Muertos. Their sugar skulls came out great. I hope they described them to you before eating them!! Next we were on to Puerto Rico to study the native people, the Tainos. Students will make an artifact of this culture during the week of Nov. 16th.

Grade 3: Students have finished up their Chicken buses from El Salvador and these will be displayed during conferences in the grade 3 hallway. Please check them out. We just began our Reader's Theater story *The Little Old Lady who was not Afraid of Anything*. Students are really getting into it. Be on the look out for the DVD in the library.

Grade 4: Students just finished up our soccer study of South America. They played two tremendous games outside. The Spanish was flying out of their mouths. It was truly a very proud moment!!! Next they are making trading cards to trade with one another. They will choose a picture of themselves doing something to illustrate a Spanish word or phrase that we have learned in class.

Parent Teacher Conferences: Please contact me if you would like to talk about your child's progress in Spanish during conferences. Please email me when you would like to meet or if you would like me to send you an email at jennifer.zugarazo@mansfieldct.org.

Gracias!



Annie E. Vinton Elementary
306 Stafford Rd
Mansfield Center, CT 06250

Phone:
(860) 423-3086

We're on the Web!
mansfieldct.org/schools/vinton

Influenza Update

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It's possible your child might have the flu. Other symptoms can include runny nose, body aches, vomiting, and diarrhea.

If you don't have a thermometer, feel your child's forehead with your hand. If it is much warmer than usual, your child probably has a fever.

One of the most effective ways to protect people from the flu and other illnesses is to keep sick people home and away from healthy people.

For *local* information on H1N1, including vaccine sites, go to www.ehhd.org. Other general websites are www.flu.gov and www.cdc.gov/flu.